

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-20 and 33-45 are pending in the present application. By this Amendment, previously presented claims 1, 10, 13-14 and 19 have been amended; previously presented claims 4 and 21-32 have been cancelled; and new claims 33-45 have been added. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present claims in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

I. Formal Matters:

Restriction Requirement

Previously presented claims 1-32 were subject to a restriction requirement. The Office Action proposed to separate the current claims into two separate groups:

Group I, Claims 1-20, directed to a vest, classified in Class 2, subclass 102; and

Group II, Claims 21-32, directed to a method of reducing an amount of radioactive material in a product and the product in the form of a vest, classified in Class 588, subclass 6.

Applicants respectfully submit that the search and examination associated with the two groups of claims above is not unduly burdensome on Examiner Muromoto. As stated in the MPEP, §803, "If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent and distinct inventions." For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully submit that the restriction should be withdrawn. However, given the likelihood that Examiner Muromoto will not reconsider the present restriction requirement, Applicants have amended the claims as shown above, effectively electing Group I directed to previously presented Claims 1-20, which have been amended as shown above.

II. Conclusion:

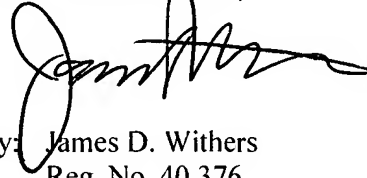
Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-3, 5-20 and 33-45 define patentable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of these claims.

No additional fees are believed due; however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 503025.

Should Examiner Muromoto believe that anything further is necessary to place the application in better condition for allowance, Examiner Muromoto is respectfully requested to contact Applicant's representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

WITHERS & KEYS, LLC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James D. Withers', is written over the printed name.

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